

# Teen Discovery Camp

## Parent Handbook

Summer 2016



Herndon Community Center

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Herndon, VA 20170

(703) 787-7300

[www.herndon-va.gov](http://www.herndon-va.gov)

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## Teen Discovery Staff

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### **Vision Statement**

The Herndon Parks and Recreation Department provides an exceptional level of service by offering enriching programs, parks, and facilities that provide opportunities for all Town citizens to recreate. The Department has standards to manage the efficiency and effectiveness of the parks and recreation operation delivered in a recognized professional manner. The Department offers diverse, cost effective, and affordable programs and achieves its fiscal responsibilities.

### **Mission Statement**

“Promoting a sense of community and enriching the quality of life.” The Town of Herndon Parks and Recreation Department aspires to enrich the lives of its residents, serve as stewards of Town resources, and foster a sense of community by providing diverse, accessible and valued parks, facilities and recreation programs, in addition to those provided by Fairfax County.

### **Camp Hours**

Teen Discovery operates Monday through Friday from 10am until 5pm. Early Bird hours are available starting at 8:30am, but requires an additional charge. For trips involving longer commutes, the starting and ending times may be changed. Parents will be notified of these changes well in advance. Every effort will be made to return on time, but due to the unpredictability of local traffic, late returns are sometimes unavoidable. In this case, parents will be contacted and a message will be left on the Teen Discovery hotline indicating the expected arrival time.

### **Arrivals and Departures**

Parents/Guardians are strongly encouraged to sign their child in and out each day. This allows the staff and guardians to become acquainted and ensure that the campers are picked up safely. If necessary, teens are allowed to sign themselves in and out with written permission from parents and/or guardians. The time for which your teen is allowed to sign his or herself out should be indicated.

Before your child is signed in and after they are signed out, the Teen Discovery staff is not responsible for your child.

### **Walking/ Bike Riding**

We *are* allowing campers to walk or ride bikes to camp at appropriate times if it is in a safe manner. However, before a camper can sign himself/herself in, a parent must write a detailed note listing when the child should arrive, when the child may leave, by what means the child will get to and from camp, and the route the child will take. This letter will be kept on file, and a form will need to be signed by the consenting parent. Should there be a problem with a camper not following the instructions set forth in the parent letter, self-sign-in/sign-out privileges will be taken away, and a parent must be present to sign the child in and out of camp. Bicycles will need to be locked to the bike rack which is located next to the front entrance of HCC. The department is not responsible for bicycles left overnight or if they are stolen.

### **Late Arrivals**

Teen Discovery is a travel based camp, and each day has been planned out based on specific departure times. For many of our planned trips, we have reserved time slots that need to be kept. For this reason, late arrivals are **STRONGLY** discouraged. This is especially true for days that have early departures. On these days, we are usually traveling further than normal and need the extra time to ensure that your teen will get the maximum enjoyment out of the trip. There will be a 10 minute grace period from the scheduled camp start time until we leave for our destination. Parents can call the Teen Discovery hotline if they are running late, but no guarantees will be made of holding the vans up. However, we will make every effort not to leave any campers behind.

### **Early Pick-Up**

Due to the nature of Teen Discovery Camp, early pick up is not always possible. We will do our best to make accommodations on an as-needed basis however the camp schedule will not be changed to meet individual needs. If an early pick-up is necessary, parents are to drive to the trip location for that day and pick up your teen from that activity.

### **Late Pick-Up**

Unless otherwise noted, Teen Discovery ends at 5pm. If a parent or guardian has not picked their child up by 5:15pm, they will be charged a late fee. The fee is \$5 for every 15 minutes they are late. For example, if camp ends at 5pm, and the guardian does not pick their child up until 5:45pm, they will be charged \$10. Please make every effort to pick your child up on time.

### **Absence Policy**

When you know that your teen will be absent from camp, please notify camp staff by providing a written note or calling the Teen Discovery hotline. Absences are to be called in by 9:45a.m (or 15 minutes before the scheduled start time). If a teen is absent from camp without notice, we will make an attempt to reach the parents using phone numbers provided.

### **Parent/Staff Communication and Forms**

All campers are required to have a Camper Information Form and a Teen Discovery Participant Agreement Form on file. In addition, some of the activities in which your teen will participate in will require signed waivers. All forms are due the ***morning of the first day of camp*** or the teen will not be allowed to participate in that day's activity.

If a parent needs to communicate to staff during the Teen Discovery Camp, please call the Teen Discovery hotline. The hotline will be used for late arrivals, absences or any other question or concern that a parent needs to relay to the Teen Discovery staff. There will also be messages left on this line if the camp is delayed in their return so that parents may be kept informed about their child.

## **Forms**

There are several forms that you may need to complete in an addition to the mandatory forms you already completed to register for the camp which were the Camper Information Form and the General Registration Form. These forms are:

1. **Sign In/Out Form** – if you are allowing your child to sign themselves in and out of camp which means no adult is responsible for picking them up to bringing them to camp.
2. **Medication Form** – if your child needs to take medication during camp you will need to complete this form. This form will be available at the parent meeting or can be requested.

## **Medication**

Teen Discovery Staff cannot administer, provide, nor carry any prescribed medications. If your child is on any type of medication, they will be held responsible for taking it on their own. Parents need to notify staff if your child is taking prescription medication. Regarding medication that must be taken on a time schedule, the time schedule/medication to be taken MUST be in written on the medical form provided.

## **Sunscreen, Insect Repellants, and Other Lotions**

Teen Discovery staff does not have the rights to administer lotions, repellants, or other lotions to campers. We will provide extra repellants, and sunscreens should your teenager forget to bring/apply it prior to the start of the day's activity. We strongly urge your teenager to bring their own sunscreen and/or insect repellent daily. Sun Protection Factor (SPF) of 15 or more is recommended. Teens are encouraged to wear hats, and wear swim shirts on water park days.

## **Personal Belongings**

Ultimately, the individual participant is responsible for any personal belongings brought to camp. We do recommend extensive labeling of all their belongings (swimsuit, towel, sunscreen, lunch box, water bottles, etc.) as a preventive measure and for tracking personal belongings. We ask that they keep everything in a labeled backpack. Staff will not be responsible for lost or stolen items. A Lost and Found box is kept at the Herndon Community Center if teens do lose any items during camp.

Cell phones are allowed to be carried every day at camp by the campers during camp hours. They should only be used in emergencies. This simply allows for a fuller experience and enjoyment of the days' activities. The cell phone is the responsibility of the teenager. Teen Discovery, staff, and the Herndon Community Center are not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged cell phones.

## **Clothing and Attire**

It is important for campers to check the calendar on a daily basis in order to ensure proper dress. Many of Teen Discovery destinations will be outdoors however plans may change due to weather or other factors. An extra change of clothes is highly recommended so that campers will be able to participate in any type activity. Likewise,

on days where our planned activity involves outdoor adventure (rafting, canoeing, hiking, etc.), campers should come prepared with extra food and water as they may not be available on site. Appropriate footwear (i.e. sturdy, closed toed shoes) should be worn most every day, particularly when participating in outdoor adventure activities. Campers should remember to bring a bathing suit and towel to camp every day.

Teen Discovery also asks that campers use discretion in their choice of dress. For example, any clothing item that they would not be allowed to wear in school would not be appropriate for camp. This includes any clothing with alcohol, drug, or age sensitive graphics or messages. For your child's protection, please ensure that your child's clothing is tasteful and modest. They will be participating in a number of physical activities that may require bending, jumping, squatting, etc. Your child should wear clothing that allows them to participate comfortably.

### **Food/Lunches**

It is highly recommended that campers bring both a lunch, snack and water to camp every day. There are many trips in which the purchasing of food will be very limited or completely unavailable. Highly perishable foods or peanut products are not recommended. Teen Discovery staff is not allowed to furnish any money to the campers for food or drink. If your child has any special food needs, please feel free to speak with of the staff members.

***YOUR TEEN MUST BRING A SOURCE OF WATER EVERY DAY TO CAMP!***

Many of the activities that your child will participate in will take place outside. Please be sure that your child has enough water for those activities. Bringing extra water on hotter days will help protect your teen from heat related illness and fully participate in the day's activities.

### **Swimming**

We will be visiting places at which the campers will be able to swim at either a pool or beach. The rules of the location and their lifeguards must be followed at all times. Campers should be aware of their swimming ability and act accordingly. Any camper seen disobeying any lifeguards or staff at these locations will be removed from the activity for 5 to 30 minutes.

### **Vehicle Rules**

Due to the traveling nature of Teen Discovery, we want safety to be our first priority. During our trips, the driver of each van must be obeyed at all times. Safety belts must be worn at ALL times. Failure to wear a seat belt during travel will result in time spent out of the activity for 10 to 30 minutes. CD players, MP3 players or other entertainment devices must be used with headphones. The drivers reserve the right to re-assign seating when necessary or request that electronics not be used. Campers are responsible for their own trash and will not be allowed to leave the van until the vehicle is clean.

### **Kids at Hope**

So many documents, strategies, programs, and models are designed to address children “at risk.” School achievement, drug and alcohol use, gang activity, teen pregnancy and youth violence are all threats and challenges our youth face today. Preventing, treating, managing and addressing these issues for students has resulted in institutionalizing the term “kids at risk,” labeling the children, not the conditions, in a stereotypical and negative manner.

Kids at Hope is committed to reversing the harmful effects and self-fulfilling prophecy associated with the “youth at risk” programs and strategies. The fact is, now more than ever, it is incumbent upon us – the adults – to believe in every child’s success, and with this belief, do whatever we can to promote the hopeful side of all children. We must use the language, provide the encouragement day by day, minute by minute, to have our children see HOPE in themselves so that they are more equipped to meet their life challenges.

The more adults who practice and act on the belief that all children can succeed, NO EXCEPTIONS, the more we will see our children step up to that expectation.

### ***Kids at Hope in Action***

A “Hope Community,” or Hope Square is a geographical location wherein different youth organizations, businesses and school personnel agree to share a common belief system and resources, enables us to recognize our collective strengths, and challenges us to become and do greater and more powerful good than any of us can do individually.

Kids at Hope compels us to rally around a set of common principles and practices that protect our individual identities and missions and enhance our capacity to offer a full range of coordinated services so that every child in our community can succeed; NO EXCEPTIONS!

### ***Components of Kids at Hope***

Kids at Hope incorporate three universal truths from research findings that help us understand why some children succeed and others fail.

These universal truths are:

1. Children succeed when they are surrounded by adults who believe they will succeed.
2. Children succeed when they have meaningful and sustainable relationships with caring adults.
3. Children succeed when they are able to articulate a future beyond just a career or occupation.

As Treasure Hunters we commit to helping our youth to experience “Mental Time Travel.” As Mental Time Travelers, our youth can imagine their future and can feel empowered to plan for and reach their goals in four destination points:

- Home and Family Education and Career Community and Service
- Hobbies and Recreation

### ***Kids at Hope...***

- Inspires an innovative concept which states and demonstrates that all children are capable of success, NO EXCEPTIONS! Kids at Hope is not another program; it is first and foremost a belief system, supported by a cultural strategy and then enhanced by existing or new programs.
- Empowers Kids at Hope empowers organizations to transform their cultures through professional, personal and volunteer development workshops, seminars, institutes and classes.
- Transforms Kids at Hope demonstrates how an entire organization, school and/or community can support the success of all children, NO EXCEPTIONS!
- Staff and campers recite the Kids at Hope pledges and engage in daily activities that demonstrate our belief that all children all capable of success, NO EXCEPTIONS!

### ***KIDS at Hope Pledge Treasure Hunter Pledge***

As an adult and a Treasure Hunter I am committed to search for all the talents, skills and intelligence that exists in all children and youth. I believe all children are capable of success, NO EXCEPTIONS!

### **Disciplinary Procedures**

Teen Discovery staff handles discipline in a positive, consistent, and constructive manner. Physical punishment, humiliation of any kind, yelling at, or denial of basic necessities will not be used or tolerated. Instances of teasing or the deliberate act of “picking on” (i.e. physical abuse, mental abuse, or verbal abuse of any kind) of another participant WILL NOT BE TOLERATED. In dangerous situations, physical restraint may be used in a safe manner, but is again strongly discouraged. For example, a child hitting another individual and refusing to stop must be physically restrained for the protection of the other individuals. Staff will approach discipline in a structured three (3) step process:

#### **The Three Steps of Discipline**

##### **First Offense:**

The staff will talk to the teen to discuss the behavior and will work in a cooperative manner to improve the behavior.

##### **Second Offense:**

The staff will redirect their behavior by providing a positive alternative to the activity. (i.e. A teenager being a disruption in the Teen Center will be asked to a game of “Horse” in the gymnasium.)

##### **Third Offense**

The staff will pull your teen out of the activity for a certain period of time (ranging from 5-30 minutes) under staff supervision.

If a teen continually displays behavior disruptions, the director will contact the guardian of the teen. Together, the director and teen will work to help the camper adjust and succeed for the remainder of their camp session. If interacting cooperatively with the guardians does not work, your teenager will be dismissed from camp. There are NO refunds should your teen be dismissed for disciplinary reasons.

### **General Illness**

Teens displaying cold sweats, vomiting, difficulty breathing, heavy coughing, or other symptoms of a communicable disease will not be admitted to camp.

The camp will notify the parent/guardian if an illness comes up while on the trip. The parent/guardian is responsible for picking the camper up as soon as possible. While on the trip, the staff will do their best to make the camper as comfortable as possible away from the other campers until the parent or guardian can make arrangements for pick up. All staff will hold a valid CPR and First Aid Certification prior to the start of camp.

### **Communicable Disease**

Communicable diseases may be transmitted either by contact with an infected person's bodily fluids specifically saliva or an animal/insect bite. Common childhood communicable diseases include: animal bites, chickenpox, the common cold, head lice, mononucleosis, pink eye, ringworm and strep throat. In order to prevent many of these communicable diseases, it is important to stress to campers proper hygiene practices like hand washing, covering their mouths when coughing or sneezing and not sharing brushes, hats, or water bottles.

#### *Animal Bites*

Bites should be cleaned immediately with soap and water. If rabies is suspected, the **Animal Services Division of the Fairfax County Police Department should be contacted at 703-691-2131.**

#### *Chickenpox*

A sudden onset of mild fever, malaise and itchy rash progresses to lesions on the skin that last three to four days before scabbing. Cases must be isolated and the camper should be excluded from camp for no less than five days after the eruption of the last vesicles or until the vesicles become dry.

#### *Common Cold*

Symptoms include runny nose, watery eyes and a generalized tired feeling. It is important to discourage the child from sharing glasses, straws, water bottles, eating utensils, etc. while sick.

#### *Head Lice*

Signs of lice include scratching of the scalp and pinpoint gray/white eggs (nits) attached securely to the hair shaft. Head lice is transmitted by direct contact with an infested person, clothing, hair brush, or hat. **Do not have your child attend camp until the day after the first shampoo, lotion or cream rinse pediculicide is properly applied.**

#### *Mononucleosis*

Fever, sore throat, swollen glands and fatigue are common symptoms. This camper is allowed to participate as normal unless a fever of more than 100 degrees is present or if a doctor advises against participation in contact sports.

#### *Pink Eye*

Symptoms include pink/redness of the eyes, with white or yellow discharge on the eyelids; eye pain, or redness of the eyelids or skin surrounding the eye. **Exclude the camper from camp activities until 24 hours after treatment begins or child is examined by a physician.**

#### *Ringworm*

Ringworm of the skin is a reddish, ring like rash that is often itchy or flaky but may be moist and crusted and may burn; the central area often clears as it progresses. Transmission occurs by direct skin or scalp contact or indirect contact with items or materials contaminated with fungus from skin, scalp or hairs, e.g. combs, brushes, hats, clothing.

#### *Strep Throat*

Initial symptoms are fever, sore throat, often enlarged tender lymph nodes in neck. **Exclude child from camp until 24 hours after treatment begins. The camper will be allowed to return once the fever has subsided.**

#### *Poison Ivy*

Poison Ivy is a green 3-leaved plant that can be found either as a vine or as a shrub in wooded areas. If a camper comes into contact with poison ivy, the camper should:

1. Rinse their skin right away with warm water and soap in order to rinse off the oil from the plant.
2. Once the camper has gotten home, they should wash all the clothes they were wearing when they came into contact with the plant.
3. Make sure to wash water bottles, sunscreen bottles, hats, or any other object that may have come in contact with the plant's oil with soap and warm water.

If your child does come into contact with poison ivy, there are several methods that may help with the itching as the skin heals. These methods include: an oatmeal bath, baking soda bath, Calamine lotion and antihistamine pills.

#### **Emergency Situations**

In the rare case of an emergency, for example, fire, weather, or lock down, please contact the Herndon Community Center front desk. Teen Discovery will follow the guidelines for the Town of Herndon's Emergency Response Plan. We will make every attempt to call parents if necessary.

## **Child Abuse Statement**

The staff of Teen Discovery is obligated by the Code of Virginia to report any suspected incidence of child abuse and/or neglect. If we suspect any abuse, neglect, or any other endangerments, we will work with Child Protective Services and the Herndon Police Department.

## **Bullying**

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at Teen Discovery and will not be tolerated. Bullying is counterproductive to team spirit and can be devastating to a victim. Summer Fun is committed to providing a safe, caring and friendly environment for all of our campers. If bullying does occur, all parents should know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Any parent who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell a Camp Counselor, Assistant Camp Director, or Camp Director.

Objectives of Teen Discovery Bullying Policy and Action Plan:

1. To make it clear that the camp will not tolerate bullying in any form.
2. To define bullying and give parents a good understanding of what bullying is.
3. To make it known to all parents that there is a policy and protocol should any bullying issues arise.
4. To make how to report bullying clear and understandable.
5. To spread the word that Teen Discovery takes bullying seriously and that all parents can be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

### *What Is Bullying?*

Generally, bullying is the use of aggression, whether intentional or not, which hurts another person. Bullying results in pain and distress.

Bullying is the severe or repeated use by one or more Teen Discovery camper of oral, written, electronic or other technological expression, image, sound, data or intelligence of any nature (regardless of the method of transmission), or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at any other camper that to a reasonably objective person has the effect of:

- causing physical or emotional harm to the other camper or damage to the other camper's property;
- placing the other camper in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage to his/her property;
- creating a hostile environment for the other camper at any Teen Discovery activity;
- infringing on the rights of the other camper at any Teen Discovery activity; or

- materially and substantially disrupting camp or the orderly operation of the camp day

Cyber-bullying is the use of text messaging, social media websites, emails, and other forms of electronic communication to embarrass or harm a fellow camper. This form of bullying includes sending mean text messages or emails, spreading rumors on social media websites, or uploading embarrassing pictures and videos to the Internet. This form of bullying will not be tolerated by the Teen Discovery Staff.

#### *Reporting Procedure*

A camper who feels that he or she has been bullied is asked to do one or more of the following things:

- Talk to their parents;
- Talk to a Counselor, Camp Director, or another designated individual;
- Write a letter or email to the Counselor, Camp Director, or another designated individual;

There is no express time limit for initiating a complaint under this procedure, but every effort should be made to bring the complaint to the attention of the appropriate club leadership as soon as possible to make sure that memories are fresh and behavior can be accurately recalled and the bullying behavior can be stopped as soon as possible.

#### *How We Handle Bullying*

If bullying is occurring during camp-related activities, we **STOP BULLYING ON THE SPOT** using the following steps:

1. Intervene immediately. It is ok to get another adult to help.
2. Separate the kids involved.
3. Make sure everyone is safe.
4. Meet any immediate medical or mental health needs.
5. Stay calm. Reassure the kids involved, including bystanders.
6. Model respectful behavior when you intervene.

## Pick Up/ Drop Off Authorization

### Teen Discovery Camp

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Individuals listed below were not listed on my child's Camper Information Form but have my permission to pick up or drop off my child to/from the Teen Discovery program.

Name	Phone Number
1) _____	_____
2) _____	_____
3) _____	_____

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian – Print

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian – Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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### Sign-In/Sign-Out Teen Discovery Camp

My child \_\_\_\_\_ has permission to sign himself/herself into/out of Teen Discovery program each day. My child's arrival time to camp will be \_\_\_\_\_. My child will leave camp at \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian – Print

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

2/2016